

## Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 STATE 201257 TOSEC 090103  
ORIGIN NODS-00

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /001 R

DRAFTED BY NEA:N A VELIOTES/PM:R BARTHOLOMEW:JD  
APPROVED BY D:W CHRISTOPHER  
T:L BENSON  
NEA:A L ATHERTON  
PM:L GELB (SUBSTANCE)  
S/S-O:LFLEISCHER

-----025624 240153Z /61

O 240055Z AUG 77 ZFF4  
FM SECSTATE WASHDC  
TO USDEL SECRETARY IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T STATE 201257 TOSEC 090103

NODIS  
FROM ATHERTON AND GELB THROUGH BENSON

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MASS, IS, US

SUBJECT: ACTION MEMORANDUM: F-16'S FOR ISRAEL  
(S/S NO.7721865)

1. ISSUE FOR DECISION: TIMING OF INFORMING ISRAELIS OF  
OUR NEGATIVE DECISION ON CO-PRODUCTION AND OF OUR APPROVAL  
OF 50 F-16'S. DECISION IS REQUIRED BEFORE US-ISRAELI  
CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE MEETING NOW SCHEDULED FOR 5:30  
THURSDAY, AUGUST 25, UNLESS MEETING IS TO BE CANCELLED.

2. BACKGROUND: YOU INSTRUCTED US TO ARRANGE A  
MEETING OF THE US-ISRAELI CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE THIS WEEK  
TO INFORM THE ISRAELIS THAT WE WILL NOT AGREE TO F-16 CO-  
PRODUCTION. THE MEETING HAS BEEN ARRANGED FOR THURSDAY

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AND BRZEZINSKI IS SO INFORMED. YOU ALSO ASKED LES TO  
INFORM BRZEZINSKI THAT YOU SUPPORT 50 F-16'S, AND TO ASK  
BRZEZINSKI TO GET THE PRESIDENT'S CONFIRMATION OF THE 50,  
WHICH HE HAS DONE. YOU DID NOT EXPRESS ANY STRONG  
PREFERENCE CONCERNING THE TIMING OF INFORMING THE ISRAELIS  
OF THE POSITIVE DECISION ON THE 50 AIRCRAFT A;D ASKED THIS  
BE DISCUSSED WITH BRZEZINSKI.

3. NEA AND PM AGREE THAT BOTH DECISIONS SHOULD BE CONVEYED TO THE ISRAELIS AT THE SAME TIME; (A) TO AVOID A DRAWN-OUT

PROCESS; (B) TO AVOID HAVING THE 50 F-16'S APPEAR TO BE A CONCESSION SUBSEQUENTLY EXTORTED FROM US TO OFFSET THE NEGATIVE CO-PRODUCTION DECISION; (C) TO PERMIT US TO EMPHASIZE THE POSITIVE RE THE DECISION ON 50 AIRCRAFT DOMESTICALLY.

4. HOWEVER, ROY ATHERTON STRONGLY BELIEVES THAT WE SHOULD NOT RELAY THE DECISIONS TO THE ISRAELIS BEFORE THE CONCLUSION OF THE FOREIGN MINISTER'S TALKS AND, IN ANY EVENT, BELIEVES WE SHOULD REVIEW TIMING AFTER YOUR RETURN FROM CHINA. BENSON AND GELB FEEL WE SHOULD GO AHEAD WITH BOTH DECISIONS THIS WEEK.

5. NEA POSITION: THE ISRAELIS WILL BE EXTREMELY CONCERNED ABOUT THE NEGATIVE DECISION ON CO-PRODUCTION AND AT THE NUMBER OF 50 AIRCRAFT. IF WE WERE TO CONVEY SUCH A DECISION THIS WEEK, IT WOULD COME AT A TIME OF UNUSUAL TURBULENCE IN OUR RELATIONS. WE ARE ALSO PLANNING TO REQUEST BROADER ASSURANCES FROM ISRAEL RE POSSIBLE NUCLEAR COOPERATION WITH SOUTH AFRICA AND ARE RECOMMENDING THAT LEWIS LEAN ON DAYAN ABOUT HIS ILL CONSIDERED PUBLIC REMARKS RE OUR POSITION ON THE WEST BANK. THE ISRAELIS  
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COULD BE EXPECTED TO USE THE TIME PRIOR TO THE RETURN OF CONGRESS SEPTEMBER 6 TO PREPARE A CAMPAIGN TO TURN AROUND THE NEGATIVE CO-PRODUCTION DECISION AND INCREASE NUMBERS. THIS COULD BECOME INVOLVED IN OUR C-130 EGYPTIAN PACKAGE WHICH WILL HAVE TO CLEAR CONGRESS IN SEPTEMBER (AND WILL ALREADY BE COMPLICATED BY THE MIG ISSUE). WE MIGHT FIND OURSELVES IN THE UNCOMFORTABLE POSITION OF CONSIDERING TRADE-OFFS. (THE ISRAELIS WILL TRY TO TURN THE DECISIONS AROUND THROUGH HILL PRESSURE IN ANY EVENT. WE PREFER THAT THIS NOT OCCUR IN RELATIONSHIP TO THE C-130 PACKAGE.) ARAB REACTION TO THE DECISION TO SELL 50 F-16'S WILL BE EXTREMELY NEGATIVE AND, THROUGH ARAB EYES, WILL BE SEEN AS A ONE BILLION DOLLAR REWARD FOR "ISRAELI INTRANSIGENCE". WE DO NOT WANT THIS TO MAKE EVEN MORE DIFFICULT THE COMING ROUND (THE NEGATIVE ON CO-PRODUCTION WOULD BE LOST ON THE ARABS). ALSO, WE DO NOT BELIEVE NEWS OF A MAJOR NEW ARMS DEAL WITH ISRAEL SHOULD BECOME PUBLIC AT THE TIME THE PLO IS IN PROCESS OF FORMALLY CONSIDERING OUR OFFER OF DIRECT CONTACTS.

6. T AND PM POSITION: BENSON AND GELB DISAGREE AND ARGUE THAT WE SHOULD CONVEY DECISIONS THIS WEEK. T AND PM

BELIEVE THERE WILL BE NO OPPORTUNE TIME FOR THIS ACTION.  
WHENEVER IT IS TAKEN, ISRAELIS AND THEIR CONGRESSIONAL  
SUPPORTERS WILL REACT NEGATIVELY, USING ALL MEANS AT THEIR  
DISPOSAL TO ALTER DECISION INCLUDING ATTEMPTS TO HOLD  
EGYPTIAN C-130 AND OTHER PENDING ARAB SALES HOSTAGE. T  
AND PM ARE CONVINCED, HOWEVER, THAT LONGER WE DELAY, MORE  
ISRAELIS WILL BECOME CONVINCED THAT WE INTEND TO USE F-16  
ISSUE AS MEANS OF EXERTING LEVERAGE AGAINST THEM ON POLI-  
TICAL ISSUES. CANCELLATION OF SCHEDULED THURSDAY MEETING  
WILL SURELY AROUSE THEIR SUSPICIONS. DELAY THUS CAN ONLY  
FEED ISRAELI CONCERNS ON THIS SUBJECT AND GIVE THEM  
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NOT BE ABLE TO HOLD LINE ON DECISION WITHOUT RISK OF  
MASSIVE CONFRONTATION AND UNDESIRABLE ENTANGLEMENT WITH  
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OTHER ISSUES.

7. NSC POSITION: BRZEZINSKI HAS ASKED THAT ACTING  
SECRETARY INFORM YOU THAT HE BELIEVES NOW IS NOT RPT NOT  
A GOOD TIME TO INFORM THE ISRAELIS, AND WE SHOULD DELAY  
AT LEAST TEN DAYS. HIS POSITION IS BASED ON DESIRE TO  
AVOID ISRAELIS INTERPRETING DECISIONS (NEGATIVE IN  
ISRAELI EYES) AS LINKED TO SETTLEMENTS CONTROVERSY AND  
NOT TO GIVE IMPRESSION TO PLO THAT WE MIGHT BE PRESSURING  
THEM IN THIS WAY AT THIS TIME.

8. OPTIONS: THAT WE DEFER INFORMING THE ISRAELIS OF  
THE TWO DECISIONS UNTIL WE CAN REVIEW THE TIMING OF SUCH  
AN ACTION AFTER YOUR RETURN. APPROVE.....DISAPPROVE.....

ALTERNATIVELY, THAT WE INFORM THE ISRAELIS OF BOTH OF  
THESE DECISIONS THIS WEEK. APPROVE.....DISAPPROVE.....

ALTERNATIVELY, THAT WE INFORM THE ISRAELIS OF THE NEGATIVE  
DECISION OF CO-PRODUCTION THIS WEEK AND DEFER INFORMING  
THEM OF THE DECISION ON THE 50 AIRCRAFT. APPROVE.....  
DISAPPROVE.....

DRAFTED BY:NEA:NAVELIOTES/PM:RBARTHOLOMEW  
APPROVED BY:D:WCHRISTOPHER  
CLEARANCES: T:LBENSON  
NEA:ALATHERTON  
PM:LGELB  
S/S:LFLEISCHER  
CHRISTOPHER

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INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /001 R

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DRAFTED BY S/S-O:JETHYDEN:WLT

APPROVED BY S/S-O:JETHYDEN

-----039153 242035Z /62

O 241930Z AUG 77 ZFF4

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO WHITE HOUSE IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T STATE 201257

NODIS

FOR DR. BRZEZINSKI ONLY

FOLLOWING REPEAT STATE 201257 ACTION USDEL SECRETARY 24 AUG 77

QUOTE

S E C R E T STATE 201257 TOSEC 090103

NODIS

FROM ATHERTON AND GELB THROUGH BENSON

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MASS, IS, US

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3. NEA AND PM AGREE THAT BOTH DECISIONS SHOULD BE CONVEYED TO THE ISRAELIS AT THE SAME TIME; (A) TO AVOID A DRAWN-OUT

PROCESS; (B) TO AVOID HAVING THE 50 F-16'S APPEAR TO BE A CONCESSION SUBSEQUENTLY EXTORTED FROM US TO OFFSET THE NEGATIVE CO-PRODUCTION DECISION; (C) TO PERMIT US TO EMPHASIZE THE POSITIVE RE THE DECISION ON 50 AIRCRAFT DOMESTICALLY.

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7. NSC POSITION: BRZEZINSKI HAS ASKED THAT ACTING SECRETARY INFORM YOU THAT HE BELIEVES NOW IS NOT RPT NOT A GOOD TIME TO INFORM THE ISRAELIS, AND WE SHOULD DELAY AT LEAST TEN DAYS. HIS POSITION IS BASED ON DESIRE TO AVOID ISRAELIS INTERPRETING DECISIONS (NEGATIVE IN ISRAELI EYES) AS LINKED TO SETTLEMENTS CONTROVERSY AND NOT TO GIVE IMPRESSION TO PLO THAT WE MIGHT BE PRESSURING THEM IN THIS WAY AT THIS TIME.

8. OPTIONS: THAT WE DEFER INFORMING THE ISRAELIS OF THE TWO DECISIONS UNTIL WE CAN REVIEW THE TIMING OF SUCH AN ACTION AFTER YOUR RETURN. APPROVE.....DISAPPROVE.....

ALTERNATIVELY, THAT WE INFORM THE ISRAELIS OF BOTH OF THESE DECISIONS THIS WEEK. APPROVE.....DISAPPROVE.....

ALTERNATIVELY, THAT WE INFORM THE ISRAELIS OF THE NEGATIVE DECISION OF CO-PRODUCTION THIS WEEK AND DEFER INFORMING THEM OF THE DECISION ON THE 50 AIRCRAFT. APPROVE.....DISAPPROVE.....

DRAFTED BY:NEA:NAVELIOTES/PM:RBARTHOLOMEW

APPROVED BY:D:WCHRISTOPHER

CLEARANCES: T:LBENSON

NEA:ALATHERTON

SECRET

SECRET

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PM:LGELB

S/S:LFLEISCHER

CHRISTOPHER

UNQUOTE CHRISTOPHER".

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NNN

## Message Attributes

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**Decaption Note:**  
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**Disposition Event:**  
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**Document Number:** 1977STATE201257  
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**Drafter:** N A VELIOTES/PM:R BARTHOLOMEW:JD  
**Enclosure:** TOSEC 90103  
**Executive Order:** GS  
**Errors:** N/A  
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**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**SAS ID:** 1498938  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** ACTION MEMORANDUM: F-16\S FOR ISRAEL (S/S NO.7721865)  
**TAGS:** MASS, IS, US  
**To:** SECRETARY  
**Type:** TE  
**vdkgvwkey:** odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS\_Docs/6c271054-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc  
**Review Markings:**  
Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
22 May 2009  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009